



CONNECTICUT ACADEMY OF
FAMILY PHYSICIANS
CARING FOR CONNECTICUT'S FAMILIES

Statement in Support of
Raised Bill 245 – An Act Concerning Smoking in Public Places
and
Raised Bill 264 – An Act Prohibiting Smoking in licensed Day Care Facilities
Public Health Committee
March 1, 2010

The Connecticut Academy of Family Physicians submits this statement in support of Raised Bill 245 – An Act Concerning Smoking in Public Places and Raised Bill 264 – An Act Prohibiting Smoking in Licensed Day Care Facilities.

We were very pleased when the Connecticut General Assembly eliminated smoking in many public places and are very pleased that Committee is now extending the smoking prohibition to workplaces with one or more employees and to day care facilities licensed by the Department of Public Health.

As physicians, we are extremely concerned about the use of tobacco and the health risks that it poses. Every year, physicians must tell so many patients that they have lung cancer, emphysema, heart disease, peripheral vascular disease, and other illnesses caused by cigarette smoking. (Tobacco also contributes to the severity of strokes, colds and pneumonia, and in pregnant woman it increases the risk of miscarriages, preterm deliveries, and infant death.) This is devastating to our patients who many times cannot be cured of their disease. It is even more devastating to their husbands, wives, mothers,

fathers, and children who must watch the patient suffer through an agonizing illness only to lose their life.

The Connecticut Academy of Family Physicians has attempted to combat smoking through participation in the TarWars program. The program is presented voluntarily by members of the Academy to fifth grade children. While the TarWars program has been helpful in protecting children from starting to smoke, it cannot prevent children from being exposed to secondhand smoke. According to the American Lung Association, secondhand smoke contains over 4,000 chemicals and 200 poisons. Further, secondhand smoke has been classified by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as a known cause of cancer in humans. The EPA further estimates that secondhand smoke is the cause of nearly 3,000 lung cancer deaths and 35,000 heart disease deaths in nonsmokers each year. The effects of secondhand smoke on children are equally as bad. Children or infants exposed to secondhand smoke are more likely to develop respiratory tract infections, more likely to die because of sudden infant death syndrome, and more likely to develop asthma complications. The list of dangers from smoking and from secondhand smoke are endless. We strongly urge this committee to support both bills.

For more information, please call:

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